



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

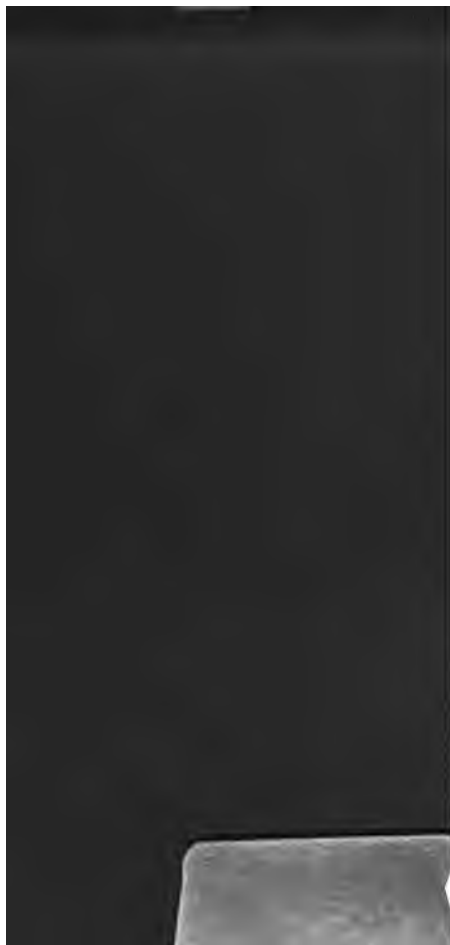
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







2805. f. 173.



1

BEAUTIFUL BOUQUETS

GATHERED

FROM THE POETS OF ALL COUNTRIES

THE

GARLAND OF

WILD ROSES

SELECTED & EDITED BY L.V.

LONDON

FREDERICK WARNE & CO.

BEDFORD ST. COVENT GARDEN

NEW YORK — SCRIBNER & CO.



BEAUTIFUL BOUQUETS,
CULLED FROM THE POETS OF ALL COUN.

THE GARLAND
OF
WILD ROSES.

With Coloured Illustrations
FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS.

LONDON:
FREDERICK WARNE AND CO
BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
NEW YORK: SCRIBNER, WELFORD AND CO.
1869.

LONDON :
SAVILL, EDWARDS AND CO., CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.





CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<i>Wild Flowers</i>	ANON. 1
<i>Perdita's Wish</i>	Shakspeare 2
<i>On Gathering Wild Roses</i>	3
<i>The Daisy</i>	J. Montgomery 4
<i>A Woodland Picture</i>	Keats 6
<i>A Bouquet of Spring Violets</i>	Shelley 7
<i>Narcissus</i>	Cowper 7
<i>Sonnet</i>	Calder Campbell 8
<i>Poppies</i>	Leigh Hunt 9
<i>Through the Fields</i>	William Sawyer 10
<i>Their Groves o' Sweet Myrtle</i>	Burns 11
<i>Flowers.</i>	Barry Cornwall 11
<i>Communion with Nature</i>	12
<i>Poor Robin</i>	Wordsworth 14

	PAGE
<i>The Sun's Bird</i>	Ebenezer Elliott 16
<i>White Daisy</i>	Thomas Hood 17
<i>The Daisy at the Deluge</i>	Beddoes 18
<i>Song of the Flowers</i>	Leigh Hunt 19
<i>A Violet Bank</i>	Shakspeare 21
<i>A Bouquet of Violets</i>	Leigh Hunt 22
<i>Music and Violets</i>	Shakspeare 23
<i>Sweet Briar</i>	Leigh Hunt 23
<i>May</i>	Ebenezer Elliott 24
<i>The Daisy</i>	Miss Day 26
<i>The Country</i>	Sir Walter Raleigh 27
<i>The Naming of the Wallflower</i>	Herrick 28
<i>The Decision of the Flower</i>	L. E. L. 29
<i>The Early Primrose</i>	Henry Kirke White 31
<i>To Primroses</i>	Robert Herrick 32
<i>A Bouquet</i>	M. E. Lee 33
<i>The Wallflower</i>	34
<i>The Lilac</i>	Burns 37
<i>Evening</i>	James Hogg 37
<i>Sonnet from Ben Jonson's "Sad Shepherd"</i>	38
<i>Quatrain</i>	Emerson 38
<i>The Satyr's Feast</i>	Fletcher 39
<i>The Teaching of the Muse</i>	Withers 40
<i>The Choice</i>	Miss Landon 41

Contents.

v

	PAGE
<i>To the Small Celandine</i>	42
<i>To the Herb Rosemary</i> . . . Henry Kirke White	45
<i>Die Herz Blume</i> Tom Hood	46
<i>A Summer Day</i> Burns	47
<i>Morning</i> Byron	47
<i>The Mill Stream</i>	48
<i>To the Dandelion</i> . . . James Russell Lowell	50
<i>Sonnet</i> S. R.	52
<i>Violets</i> Miss Landon	53
<i>May Morning</i> Milton	53
<i>Spring Crocuses</i> Mary Howitt	54
<i>The Snowdrop</i> Westwood	56
<i>The Primrose</i> Carew	57
<i>Lessons from the Gorse</i> . Elizabeth Barrett Browning	58
<i>To the Bramble Flower</i> Ebenezer Elliott	60
<i>May-Day in New England</i> . . . Mrs. Osgood	62
<i>Sweetbriar</i> Brainerd	65
<i>The Cowslip</i> Miss Landon	65
<i>The Violet.</i> Barry Cornwall	65
<i>A Boy's Song</i> The Ettrick Shepherd	66
<i>The Flowers in our Way</i> William Jones	68
<i>Morning with the Flowers</i> . . . Gerald Massey	69
<i>The Voice of the Grass</i> Mary Howitt	70
<i>Daisy</i> Wordsworth	71

	PAGE
<i>Bouquet</i>	Burns 72
<i>Flowers the Last Offering of Love</i> . .	Shakspeare 72
<i>The Yellow Violet</i>	Bryant 73
<i>The Death of the Flowers</i>	Bryant 75
<i>The Furze</i>	Wordsworth 77
<i>Lowly Pleasures</i>	Barry Cornwall 78
<i>Nature's Voices</i>	Gerald Massey 79
<i>Flowers</i>	John Graham 80
<i>Flowers</i>	Walter Savage Landor 80
<i>A Silent Nook</i>	Shelley 81
<i>Retrospection</i>	Owen Meredith 82
<i>Nature's Harmony of Colouring.</i> . . .	E. Elliott 83
<i>Youth Renewed</i>	James Montgomery 84
<i>Flowers</i>	Ebenezer Elliott 85
<i>Flowers of the Heart</i>	Ebenezer Elliott 86
<i>A Bouquet</i>	L. E. L. 87
<i>The Watcher by the Wayside</i>	88
<i>The Small Celandine</i>	Wordsworth 90
<i>Comparison</i>	91
<i>To the Daisy</i>	Wordsworth 92
<i>Early Flowers</i>	C. L. Banks 93
<i>Spring</i>	N. P. Willis 95
<i>Flowers of the Field</i>	Keble 96
<i>Field Flowers</i>	Campbell 98

Contents.

vii

	PAGE
<i>The Flower</i>	100
<i>Stanzas</i>	101
<i>Lessons Sweet of Spring</i> Keble	102
<i>The Dying Maiden</i> Ebenezer Elliott	104
<i>Flowers</i> Elliott	105
<i>To the Crocus</i> Patterson	106
<i>The Violet's Spring Song</i> . . . L. A. Twamley	107
<i>Cowslips.</i> Mary Howitt	109
<i>Ragged Robin</i> L. A. Twamley	111
<i>The Poor Man's Flowers</i> Mary Howitt	113
<i>Spring Voices.</i> Professor Wilson	115
<i>Nature</i> Bryant	117
<i>The Death of Spring</i> H. W. Haynes	118
<i>The Summer-house</i> Ebenezer Elliott	120
<i>The Poor Man's May</i> John Saunders	122
<i>The Song of the Butterfly</i> . . . J. R. Withers	123
<i>On receiving a Basket of Violets in Wax</i> F. S. H.	125
<i>The Love of Flowers</i> L. A. Twamley	127
<i>The Use of Flowers</i> Mary Howitt	128
<i>To the Fringed Gentian</i> Bryant	130
<i>Innocent Child and Snow-white Flower</i> . Bryant	131
<i>The Painted Cup</i> Bryant	132
<i>Chaucer's Flower</i> Chaucer	133
<i>Daisies</i> Thomas Miller	134

	PAGE
<i>Autumn Wild Flowers</i> Eliza Cook	136
<i>The Cottage Window Plant</i> Anon.	139
<i>How May was first Made</i> T. Miller	140
<i>The Spirits of the Flowers</i> T. Miller	142
<i>The Complaint of the Violets</i> Anon.	143
<i>Song of the Flower-Spirits</i> T. Miller	144
<i>Worship in Nature</i> Moore	146
<i>To a Mountain Daisy</i> Burns	147
<i>Wild Flowers</i> Lady Noel Byron	149
<i>A Wild-Flower Wreath</i>	150
<i>Snow-drops</i>	151
<i>Flower Dial</i> Mrs. Hemans	152



THE
GARLAND OF WILD ROSES.

WILD FLOWERS.

ANON.

DESPISE thou not the wild flower—small it seems,
And of neglected growth, and its light bells
Hang carelessly on every passing gale ;
Yet it is finely wrought, and colours there
Might shame the Tyrian purple, and it bears
Marks of a care eternal and divine ;
Duly the dews descend to give it food,
The sun revives its drooping, and the showers
Add to its beauty, and the airs of Heaven
Are round it for delight.

PERDITA'S WISH.

WINTER'S TALE.

O PROSERPINA,

For the flowers now, that, frightened, thou lett'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty: violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath: pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength * * *

Bold oxlips and

The crown imperial; lilies of all kind,
The flower-de-luce being one.

O these I lack

To make you garlands of; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er.

SHAKSPEARE.



ON GATHERING WILD ROSES.

FROM "EVENTS OF THE MONTH."

THE flowers that in our pathway spring,
These are rejected ;
The blessings every hour may bring,
These are neglected.

But blossoms blooming up on high,
Beyond our reach, against the sky,
For these we pine, for these we sigh ;

To seize some tempting distant spray,
Waving above us, far away,
We crush what in our footpath lay.

These common things we heed them not,
To be despised is sure their lot,
Trifles but made to be forgot !

But oh ! those lovely far-off things,
To those, to those, my spirit clings !
Oh, had I but an angel's wings,

To soar away beyond the earth,
Beyond its woe, beyond its mirth,
And triumph in a heavenly birth.

'Tis thus we yearn and strive in vain,
Crushing our pleasures into pain,
Till they can never bloom again.



THE DAISY.

THERE is a flower, a little flower,
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour,
And weathers every sky.

The prouder beauties of the field
In gay but quick succession shine ;
Race after race their honours yield,
They flourish and decline.

But this small flower, to nature dear,
While moons and stars their courses run,
Wreathes the whole circle of the year,
Companion of the sun.

It smiles upon the lap of May,
To sultry August spreads its charms,
Lights pale October on his way,
And 'twines December's arms.

The purple heath and golden broom,
On moory mountains catch the gale ;
On lawns the lily sheds perfume,
The violet in the dale ;

But this bold flow'ret climbs the hill,
Hides in the forest, haunts the glen,
Plays on the margin of the rill,
Peeps round the fox's den.

Within the garden's cultured round,
It shares the sweet carnation's bed ;
And blooms on consecrated ground
In honour of the dead.

The lambkin crops its crimson gem,
The wild bee murmurs on its breast,
The blue-fly bends its pensile stem
Light o'er the skylark's nest.

'Tis Flora's page, in every place,
In every season, fresh and fair ;
It opens with perennial grace,
And blossoms everywhere.

On waste and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise ;
The rose has but a summer's reign ;
The daisy never dies.

J. MONTGOMERY.



A WOODLAND PICTURE.

I STRAIGHTWAY began to pluck a posy
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy ;
A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them
Ah, sure no tasteful nook could be without them !
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them
Moist, cool, and green ; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert hedge with wild briar overtwin'd,
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones ; these too should be
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,
That, with a score of light-green brethren, shoots
From the quaint massiness of ancient roots ;
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters,
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters,
The spreading blue-bells : it may haply mourn
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn
From their fresh beds, and scattered thoughtlessly
By infant hands, left on the path to die.

KEATS.

A BOUQUET OF SPRING VIOLETS.

AFTER the slumber of the year
The woodland violets reappear ;
All things revive in field and grove,
And sea and sky ; but two, which move
And form all others, life and love.

SHELLEY.

NARCISSUS.

I SAW the pride of all the meadows
At morn, a gay Narcissus blow
Upon a river's bank, whose shadow
Bloomed in the silver waves below.
By noontide's heat its youth was wasted,
The waters as they passed complained ;
At eve its glories all were blasted,
And not one former grace remained.
While the wild rose, more safely growing
Low in the unaspiring vale,
Amidst retirement's shelter blowing,
Long sheds its sweetness on the gale.

COWPER.

SONNET.

THE bright June woods with woodland
ringing,

The cuckoo calls me, fleeing ere I c
A thousand insects with life-joyous
Disport around ; and through the orchard, sin
Its choral mass, the rich-toned thrush is wing
Its way to corny fields. No thing is dumb
To-day—the very grass breathes loud ; each
Speaks odour as it opes ; and blithely flinging
Spice-scents abroad, pink-blossom'd hawtho
Rare colours on the daisies at its foot !

'Midst all this eloquence of Nature, mute

Man's melted spirit should not rest ! The
Flowers raise to greet the sun ; and man, too,
His thankful soul to God for all these summe

CALDER C.



POPPIES.



Are slumberous poppies,
Lords of Lethe downs,
Some awake and some asleep
Sleeping in our crowns.
What perchance our dreams may know,
Let our serious beauty show.

Central depth of purple,
Leaves more bright than rose,
Who shall tell what brightest thought
Out of darkest grows;
Who through what funereal pain,
Souls to love and peace attain.

Visions aye are on us,
Unto eyes of power,
Pluto's always setting sun,
And Proserpine's bower;
There, like bees, the pale souls come,
For our drink with drowsy hum.

Taste, ye mortals, also,
Milky-hearted we;
Taste, but with a reverend care;
Active—patient be.
Too much gladness brings to gloom
Those who on the gods presume.

LEIGH HUNT,



THROUGH THE FIELDS.

PLEASANT beneath this burning sky of June,
To tread the field-paths by these hedges gay,
With shining gorse and rosy-blossom'd May
To linger here, where in full blaze of noon,
Under the quivering branches of the trees,
The air is cool and fragrant, and the light
Comes greenly tempered to the aching sight;
Or to pass hence, and plunging to the knees
In a green meadow, wade to the full sea
Of flowering grasses, foaming as we go
With clustering daisies. Nought more sweet may be,
The while the skylark soars and sings, and, lo!
The cuckoo, lone Narcissus of the woods,
Of his own name enamour'd, still that name intrudes.

WILLIAM SAWYER.

THEIR GROVES O' SWEET MYRTLE.

THEIR groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
When bright beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen or green bracken,
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom.

Far dearer to me all yon humble brown bowers,
Where the bluebell and gowan lurk lowly unseen;
For there lightly tripping amang the wild flowers,
A-listening the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

BURNS.

FLOWERS.

* * * FIRST of all the violet, with an eye
Blue as the midnight heavens; the frail snowdrop,
Born of the breath of winter, and on his brow
Fixed like a pale and melancholy star;
The languid hyacinth and wild primrose,
And daisy trodden down like modesty;
The foxglove, in whose drooping bells the bee
Makes her sweet music; the Narcissus (named
From him who died for love); the tangled woodbines,
Lilacs, and flowering limes, and scented thorns,
And some from whom the voluptuous winds of June
Catch their perfumings.

BARRY CORNWALL.



COMMUNION WITH NATURE.



COMMUNION with thy mother's eyes,
With Nature! Surely she,
Among her thousand sympathies,
Hath one caress for thee!

Behold, in all thy varied moods,
In passion and in grief,
She sets her answering attitudes
Of comfort and relief.

Old shaggy gnarls the lichen frets—
Steep banks of mountain lanes—
Moss-cushioned arms of rivulets—
The hush of woodland rains.

Faint sighs of rushes in the fens,
Faint lisplings of the tide,
Faint splashes down the gloomy glens
Of waters undescried.

Thin throbbing films of mellow light,
Wide woven in the west;
And cool star crystals, which the night
Breeds on her purple breast.

Long bars of creeping clouds, and sheets
Of wild electric flame,
And all the unregarded sweets
That melt in Nature's name.


Behold, they are not only *fair*,
Each in its fruitful arm
Hath truth and wisdom everywhere
To comfort and to charm.

BEAUTIFUL POETRY.





POOR ROBIN.

OW when the primrose makes a splendid show,
And lilies face the March winds in full blow,
And humbler growths, as moved with one desire,
Put on, to welcome Spring, their best attire,
Poor Robin yet is flowerless ; but how gay
With his red stalks upon this sunny day !
And as his tufts of leaves he spreads, content
With a hard bed, and scanty nourishment,
Mix'd with the green, some shine, not lacking power,
To rival Summer's brightest scarlet flower ;
And flowers they might well seem to passers-by,
If look'd at only with a careless eye ;
Flow'rs, or a richer produce (did it suit
The season), sprinklings of ripe strawberry fruit.
But while a thousand pleasures come unsought,
Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought ?
Is the string touch'd in prelude to a lay
Of pretty fancies that would round him play
When all the world acknowledged elfin sway ?
Or does it suit our humour to commend
Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,

Whose practice teaches, spite of names, to show
Bright colours, whether they deceive or no ?
Nay, we would simply praise the free good will
With which, though slighted, he, on naked hill,
Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill ;
Cheerful alike, if bare of flowers, as now,
Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow :
Yet more, we wish that men by men despised,
And such as lift their foreheads over-prized,
Should sometimes think, where'er they chance to spy
This child of Nature's own humility,
What recompense is kept in store or left
For all that seem neglected or bereft ;
With what nice care equivalents are given,
How just, how bountiful, the hand of Heaven !

WORDSWORTH.



THE SUN'S BIRD.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

(The Corn-Law Rhymist.)

THE cloud of the rain is beneath thee. Thou
singest
Palaced in glory ; but morn hath begun
A dark day for man, while the sunbeams thou wingest,
Bird of the sun ! Bird of the sun !

They hear thee, but see thee not—sleepy bees hear thee,
While under sad boughs the sad rivulets run ;
But thou art all music, care cannot get near thee,
Bird of the sun ! Bird of the sun !

And when from light's fields thou descendest, and over
Thy nest the wide gloom spreads its canopy dun,
How sweet will thy sleep be among the sweet clover,
Bird of the sun ! Bird of the sun !

And, there, a white network of dewdrops the fairies,
To chain leaf and flower, in a frolic have spun ;
While nigh thy dear home the tipp'd ear of the hare is,
Bird of the sun ! Bird of the sun !



WHITE DAISY.

THOMAS HOOD.

H! happy forest glades,
And murm'rous green arcades,
Ye myriad songsters on the boughs above,
When here White Daisy strays,
Greet her with joyous lays,
And in your madrigals reveal my love.
Woo her, fond turtle dove,
Sweet nightingale complain,
Ask for my heart again.
While all the warblers of the air,
Combine to sing the praises of my fair,
With pipes and trills and wand'rings mazy,
Singing—all Nature loves thee,
Sweet White Daisy.

Where her small foot is set,
Springs the sweet violet,
And pink-lipp'd daisies kiss her dress's hem,
Marking with tiny flow'rs
Her footprints in the bow'rs,

For joy that she should take her name from them ;
She needs no diadem,
Because her golden hair
Is so surpassing fair,
No crown can match its lustre fine.
She comes ! Oh birds, to hail your queen combine,
With pipes and trills and wand' rings mazy,
Singing—all Nature loves thee,
Queen White Daisy.*

THE DAISY AT THE DELUGE.

* * * * The daisy in Noah's meadow,
On which the foremost drop of rain fell warm
And soft at evening ; so the little flower
Wrapped up its leaves, and shut the treacherous water
Close to the golden welcome of its breast—
Delighting in the touch of that which led
The shower of oceans, in whose billowy drops
Tritons and lions of the sea were warring.

BEDDOES.

* This song has been set to music by Molloy.



SONG OF THE FLOWERS.



Are the sweet flowers,
Born of sunny showers,
Think whene'er you see us, what our beauty
saith ;
Utterance mute and bright,
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure by our simple breath ;
All who see us, love us,
We befit all places ;
Unto sorrow we give smiles ; and unto graces, graces.

Mark our ways, how noiseless
All, and sweetly voiceless,
Though the March winds pipe to make our passage clear ;
Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells,
Nor is known the moment green, when our lips appear.
We tread the earth in silence,
In silence build our bowers,
And leaf by leaf in silence show, till we laugh at
sweet flowers !

The dear lumpish baby,
Humming with the May bee,
Hails us with his bright stare, stumbling through the
grass;
The honey-dropping moon,
On a night in June,
Kisses our pale pathway leaves, that felt the bridegroom
pass.
Age, the withered clinger,
On us mutely gazes,
And wraps the thought of his last bed in his childhood's
daisies.

See, and scorn all duller
Taste, how heav'n loves colour,
How great Nature, dearly joys in red and green;
What sweet thoughts she thinks
Of violets and pinks,
And a thousand flashing hues, made solely to be seen;
See her whitest lilies
Chill the silver showers,
And what a red mouth has her rose, the woman of the
flowers.

Uselessness divinest
Of a use the finest
Painteth us, the teachers of the end of use;
Travellers weary-eyed
Bless us far and wide;
Unto sick and prison'd thoughts we give sudden truce;

Not a poor town window
Loves its sickliest planting,
But its wall speaks loftier truth than Babylon's whole
vaunting.

* * * * *

Who shall say that flowers
Dress not heav'n's own bowers?
Who its love, without them, can fancy—or sweet floor?
Who shall even dare
To say we sprang not there,
And came not down that Love might bring one piece of
heav'n more?
Oh, pray believe that angels,
From those blue dominions,
Brought us in their white laps down 'twixt their golden
pinions.

LEIGH HUNT.



A VIOLET BANK.

I KNOW a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows:
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk roses and with eglantine.

SHAKESPEARE.

A BOUQUET OF VIOLETS.

WE are violets blue,
For our sweetness found
Careless in the mossy shades,
Looking on the ground.
Love's dropp'd eyelids and a kiss,—
Such our breath and blueness is.

So, the mild Shape,
Hidden by love's fears,
Found us first i' the sward, when she
For hunger stoop'd in tears.
Wheresoe'er her lip she sets,
Jove said, "be breaths called violets."

LEIGH HUNT.

A TUFT of evening primroses,
O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes :
O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep ;
Eut that 'tis ever startled by the leap
Of buds into ripe flowers.

YET spite of all this eager strife,
The ceaseless play, the genuine life
That serves the steadfast hours
Is in the grass beneath that grows
Unheeded, and the mute repose
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

WORDSWORTH.

MUSIC AND VIOLETS.

THAT strain again ;—it had a dying fall :
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

SHAKSPEARE.

SWEET BRIAR.

WILD rose, sweet briar, eglantine,
All these pretty names are mine,
And scent in every leaf is mine,
And a leaf for all is mine,
And the scent—oh that's divine !
Happy, sweet, and pungent fine,
Pure as dew, and pick'd as wine.

As the rose in gardens dress'd
Is the lady self-possess'd ;
I'm the lass in simple vest,
The country lass whose blood's the best.
Were the beams that thread the briar
In the morn with golden fire
Scented too, they'd smell like me,
All elysian pungency.

LEIGH HUNT.



MAY.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

SHADE-loving hyacinth ! thou comest again,
And thy rich odours seem to swell the flow
Of the lark's song, the redbreast's lonely strain,
And the stream's tune—best sung where wild flowers
blow,
And ever sweetest where the sweetest grow.
Who hath condensed, oh broom, in thy rich flowers,
The light of mid-day suns ? What virgin's cheek
Can match this apple bloom, these glowing showers
Of glistening daisies ? How their blushes speak
Of rosy hues that bright o'er ocean break,
When cloudy morn is calm, yet fain to weep,
Because the beautiful are still the frail !
Hark ! 'tis the thrush ! he sings beneath the steep
Where coolness never quits the fountained vale !
How eloquently well he tells his tale !—
" That love is yet on earth, and yet shall be,
Though virtue struggles, and seems born to fail,
Because vile man, who might be great and free
Toils for the wolf, and bribes iniquity !"

Thou art not false, sweet bird !—Thou dost not keep
The word of promise to our ear alone,
And break it to our hearts. Maids do not weep,
Because thou feign'st ; for thee no victims groan ;
Thy voice is truth, and love is all thine own ;

* * * * *

Yet would I trust in God and goodness. On
From sun to sun the stream of mercy flows,
And still on lowly graves the little daisy grows.



THE DAISY.



OT worlds on worlds, in phalanx deep,
Need we to prove that God is here—
The daisy fresh from winter's sleep,
Tells of His hand in lines as clear.

For who but He who arched the skies,
And pours the day-spring's living flood,
Wondrous alike in all He does,
Could rear the daisy's purple bud,—

Mould its green cup, its wiry stem,
Its fringed border nicely spin,
And cut the gold-embossed gem,
That, set in silver gleams within,

And fling it, unrestrained and free,
O'er hill and dale and desert sod,
'That man where'er he walks may see
In every step the stamp of God?

MISS DAY.



THE COUNTRY.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.



O ! let the diving negro seek
For gems hid in some forlorn creek ;
We all pearls scorn,
Save what the dewy morn
Congeals upon each little spire of grass,
Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass.
And gold ne'er here appears,
Save what the yellow Ceres wears.

Blest silent groves ! oh, may ye be
For ever mirth's best nursery !
May pure contents
For ever pitch their tents
Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these moun-
tains,
And peace still slumber by these purling fountains,
Which we may every year
Find when we come a-fishing here !



THE NAMING OF THE WALLFLOWER.

WHY this flower is now called so,
List, sweet maids, and you shall know.
Understand this firstling was
Once a brisk and bonny lass,
Kept as close as Danaë was,
Who a sprightly springald loved;
And to have it fully proved,
Up she got upon a wall,
"Tempting down to slide withal;
But the silken twist untied,
So she fell, and, bruised, she died.

Jove, in pity of the deed,
And her loving, luckless speed,
Turn'd her to this plant we call
Now 'the flower of the wall.'

HERRICK.





THE DECISION OF THE FLOWER.

“’Tis a history
Handed from ages down : a nurse’s tale.”
SOUTHEY’S “THALABA.”

HERE is a flower, a purple flower,
Sown by the wind, nursed by the shower,
O’er which love has breathed a power and spell,
The truth of whispering hope to tell.
Lightly the maiden’s cheek has prest
The pillow of her dreaming rest,
Yet a crimson blush is over it spread,
As her lover’s lip had lighted its red ;
Yes, sleep before her eyes has brought
The image of her waking thought,—
That one thought hidden from all the world,
Like the last sweet hue in the rose-bud curled.
The dew is yet on the grass and leaves,
The silver veil which the morning weaves
To throw o’er the roses, those brides which the sun
Must woo and win ere the day be done.
She braided back her beautiful hair
O’er a brow like Italian marble fair.
She is gone to the fields where the corn uprears
Like an Eastern army its golden spears.

The Decision of the Flower.

The lark flew up as she passed along,
And poured from a cloud his sunny song;
And many bright insects were on wing,
Or lay on the blossoms glistening;
And with scarlet poppies around like a bower,
Found the maiden her mystic flower.
“Now, gentle flower, I pray thee tell
If my lover loves me, and loves me well;
So may the fall of the morning dew
Keep the sun from fading thy tender blue.
Now I number the leaves for my lot,
He loves not—he loves me—he loves me not!
He loves me—yes, thou last leaf, yes,
I’ll pluck thee not, for that last sweet guess!
He loves me”—“Yes!” a dear voice sighed:
And her lover stands by Margaret’s side.

L. E. L.

Literary Souvenir.

THE EARLY PRIMROSE.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

MILD offspring of a dark and sullen sire !
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled in the winds.

Thee, when young Spring first question'd Winter's
 sway ;
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
 Thee on this bank he threw,
 To mark his victory.

In this low vale, the promise of the year,
Serene, thou openest to the nipping gale,
 Unnoticed and alone,
 Thy tender elegance.

So virtue blooms, brought forth amid the storms
Of chill adversity ; in some lone walk
 Of life she rears her head,
 Obscure and unobserved ;—

While every bleaching breeze that on her blows,
Chastens her spotless purity of breast,
 And hardens her to bear
 Serene, the ills of life.



TO PRIMROSES.

ROBERT HERRICK.



HY do ye weep, sweet babes ? can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teem'd her refreshing dew ?
Alas ! you have not known that shower
That mars a flower ;
Nor felt the unkind
Breath of a blasting wind ;
Nor are ye worn with years ;
Or warp'd as we
Who think it strange to see
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
Speaking by tears before ye have a tongue.

Speak, whimpering younglings, and make known
The reason why
Ye droop and weep ;
Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullaby ?



STYLIS LILY. *Lilium stylis* Boiss.



Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kiss
From that sweetheart to this?
No, no; this sorrow, shown
By your tears shed,
Would have this lecture read:
“That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with tears brought forth.”

A BOUQUET.

PRIMROSES,
Which when the shadows fall
Like soft dreams o'er the earth,
And all around a Sabbath reigns
As at Creation's birth,
Burst the magic bonds of clay,
And greet with smiles the sun's last ray.

M. E. LEE.

THE light snowdrops, which starting from their cells,
Hang each pagoda with their silver bells.

O. W. HOLMES.



THE WALLFLOWER.

THE wall-flower—the wall-flower !
How beautiful it blooms !
It gleams above the ruined tower,
Like sunlight over tombs
It sheds a halo of repose
Around the wrecks of time ;—
To beauty give the flaunting rose,
The wall-flower is sublime.

Flower of the solitary place !
Grey ruin's golden crown !
That lendest melancholy grace
To haunts of old renown ;
Thou mantlest o'er the battlement,
By strife or storm decayed ;
And fillest up each envious rent
Time's canker-tooth hath made.

Thy roots outspread the ramparts o'er,
Where, in war's stormy day,
The Douglasses stood forth of yore,
In battle's grim array :

The clangour of the field has fled ;
The beacon on the hill
No more through midnight blazes red,—
But thou art blooming still.

Whither hath fled the choral band
That filled the Abbey's nave ?
Yon dark sepulchral yew-trees stand
O'er many a level grave ;
In the belfry's crevices, the dove
Her young brood nurseth well,
Whilst thou, lone flower ! dost shed above
A sweet decaying smell.

In the season of the tulip cup,
When blossoms clothe the trees,
How sweet to throw the lattice up,
And scent thee on the breeze.
The butterfly is then abroad,
The bee is on the wing,
And on the hawthorn by the road
The linnets sit and sing.

Sweet wall-flower—sweet wall-flower !
Thou conjurest up to me
Full many a soft and sunny hour
Of boyhood's thoughtless glee ;
When joy from out the daisies grew,
In woodland pastures green,
And summer skies were far more blue
Than since they e'er have been.

Now autumn's pensive voice is heard
Amid the yellow bowers,
The robin is the royal bird,
And thou the Queen of Flowers !
He sings on the laburnum trees,
Amid the twilight dim,
And Araby ne'er gave the breeze
Such scents as thou to him.

Rich is the pink, the lily gay,
The rose is summer's guest ;
Bland are thy charms when these decay—
Of flowers, first, last, and best !
There may be gaudier on the bower,
And statelier on the tree ;
But, wall-flower, loved wall-flower !
Thou art the flower for me !

Literary Souvenir.



THE LILAC.

Oh, were my love yon lilac fair
Wi' purple blossoms in the spring ;
And I a bird to shelter there,
When wearied on my little wing

How wad I mourn when it was torn
By autumn wild and winter rude !
But I wad sing on wanton wing,
When youthfu' May its bloom renewed.

BURNS.

EVENING.

WHEN the bluart bears a pearl,
And the daisy turns a pea,
And the bonnie lucken gowen
Has fauldit up his ee,
Then the laverock frae the blue lift
Draps down, and thinks nae shame
To woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye come hame.

JAMES HOGG.

FROM BEN JONSON'S SAD SHEPHERD.

EGLAMOUR.—

Here she was wont to go, and here, and here,
Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow :
The world may find the spring by following her,
For other print her airy steps ne'er left.
Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
Or shake the downy blow ball from his stalk !
But like the soft west wind she shot along;
And where she went the flowers took thickest root,
As she had sow'd them with her odorous foot.

QUATRAIN.

EMERSON.

BOTANIST.

Go thou to thy learned task,
I stay with the flowers of spring ;
Do thou of the ages ask
What me the flowers will bring.

THE SATYR'S FEAST.

(PREPARED FOR THE NYMPH SYRINX.)



ERE be grapes, whose lusty blood
Is the learned poet's good ;
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown
Than the squirrels' teeth that crack them ;
Deign, oh fairest fair, to take them.

* * * * *

Here be berries for a queen,
Some be red, some be green ;
These are of that luscious meat
The great god Pan himself doth eat ;
All these, and what the woods can yield,
The hanging mountain or the field
I freely offer, and ere long
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong ;
Till then humbly leave I take,
Lest the great Pan do awake,
That sleeping lies in a deep glade
Under a broad beech's shade.
I must go, I must run
Swifter than the fiery sun.

FLETCHER'S *Faithful Shepherdess*.

THE TEACHING OF THE MUSE.

WITHER.

HER divine skill taught me this,
That from everything I saw
I could some instruction draw,
And raise pleasure to the height
Through the meanest object's sight.
By the murmur of a spring
Or the least bough's rustling ;
By a daisy whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
Or a shady bush or tree ;
She could more infuse in me,
Than all nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.



EARTHLY things
Are but the transient pageants of an hour ;
And earthly pride is like the passing flower,
That springs to fall, and blossoms but to die.

KIRKE WHITE.

THE CHOICE.



OW take thy choice, thou maiden fair,
Of the gifts thy lovers bring ;
The one has brought thee jewels rare,
The other flowers of spring.

The maiden watched the rubies glow,
And wreathed them in her hair ;
But heavy they prest upon her brow,
Like the weight of secret care.

The gems that bound her forehead high,
Might have lighted a diadem ;
Yet pale grew her cheek, and dim her eye—
Her heart was not with them.

And ever an inward pulse would stir,
When she saw a spring flower wave ;
But never again did they bloom for her,
Till they blossomed upon her grave.

She was borne to the grave with purple pall,
And scutcheon and waving plume ;
One followed—the saddest one of all—
And threw wild flow'rs over her tomb.

MISS LONDON.



TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.

(COMMON PILE WORT.)



ANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
Let them live upon their praises ;
Long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory ;
Long as there are violets,
They will have a place in story ;
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
For the finding of a star ;
Up and down the heavens they go,
Men that keep a mighty rout ;
I'm as great as they, I trow,
Since the day I found thee out,
Little flower—I'll make a stir
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an elf
Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
Since we needs must first have met
I have seen thee, high and low,

- Thirty years or more and yet,
'Twas a face I did not know ;
Thou hast now, go where I may,
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless Prodigal ;
Telling tales about the sun
When we've little warmth or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood,
Travel with the multitude ;
Never heed them : I aver
That they all are wanton wooers ;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home :
Spring is coming ; Thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly unassuming spirit !
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane ; there's not a place
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee !

To the Small Celandine.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours !
Buttercups that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no ;
Others, too, of lofty mien,
They have done as worldlings do,
Taken praise that should be thin
Little, humble Celandine.

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Ill reputed upon earth ;
Herald of a mighty band,
Of a joyous train ensuing,
Serving at my heart's command,
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
I will sing, as doth behove,
Hymns in praise of what I love !





TO THE HERB-ROSEMARY.

SWEET scented flower! who art wont to bloom
On January's front severe,
And o'er the wintry desert drear,
To waft thy waste perfume!
Come, thou shalt form my nosegay now,
And I will bind thee round my brow,
And as I twine the mournful wreath,
I'll weave a melancholy song,
And sweet the strain shall be and long,—
The melody of death.

Come, funeral flower! who lov'st to dwell
With the pale corse in lonely tomb,
And throw across the deepest gloom
A sweet decaying smell.
Come, press my lips, and lie with me,
Beneath the lowly alder tree;
And we will sleep a pleasant sleep,
And not a care shall dare intrude
To break the marble solitude,
So peaceful and so deep.

To the Herb Rosemary.

And hark ! the wind god as he flies,
Moans hollow in the forest trees,
And sailing on the gusty breeze,
Mysterious music dies.
Sweet flower ! that requiem wild is mine,
It warns me to the lowly shrine,
The cold turf altar of the dead ;
My grave shall be in yon lone spot,
Where, as I lie, by all forgot,
A dying fragrance thou wilt o'er my ashes shed.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.



DIE HERZ BLUME.

THERE grew a little flower once,
That blossomed in a day,
And some said it would ever bloom,
And some 'twould fade away ;
And some said it was Happiness,
And some said it was Spring,
And some said it was Grief and Tears,
And many such a thing ;
But still the little flower bloom'd,
And still it lived and throve,
And men do it call " Summer Growth,"
But angels call it " Love !"

TOM HOOD.

A SUMMER DAY.

AYR, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods thickening green ;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar,
Turn'd amorous round the raptured scene ;
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
The birds sang love on every spray ;
Till too, too soon the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

BURNS.

MORNING.

NIGHT wanes,—the vapours round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little but his last ;
But mighty nature bounds as from her birth ;
The sun is in the heavens, and light on earth ;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam ;
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.

BYRON.



THE MILL STREAM.

LONG trails of cistus flowers
Creep on the rocky hill ;
And beds of strong spear-mint
Grow round about the mill ;
And from a mountain tarn above,
As peaceful as a dream,
Like to child unruly,
Though school'd and counsell'd truly,
Foams down the wild mill stream !
The wild mill stream it dasheth,
In merriment away,
And keeps the miller and his son
So busy all the day !

Into the mad mill stream
The mountain roses fall ;
And fern and adder's tongue
Grow on the old mill wall.
The tarn is on the upland moor,
Where not a leaf doth grow,
And through the mountain gashes
The merry mill stream dashes
Down to the sea below ;

But in the quiet hollows
The red trout groweth prime,
For the miller and the miller's son
To angle when they've time.

Then fair befall the stream
That turns the mountain mill,
And fair befall the narrow road
That windeth up the hill ;
And good luck to the countryman,
And to his old grey mare,
That upward toileth steadily,
With meal-sacks laden heavily,
In storm as well as fair.
And good luck to the miller,
And to the miller's son,
And ever may the mill-wheel turn
While mountain waters run.





TO THE DANDELION

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

(An American Poet.)

DEAR common flower, that grow'st beside the
way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer blossoms be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease:
'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offer'd wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy :
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime ;
 The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time :
 Not in mid June the golden-cuirass'd bee
Feels a more summer-like, warm ravishment
 In the white lily's breezy tent,
 His conquer'd Sybaris, than I, when first
 From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,—
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
 Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,—
 Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind,—of waters blue
 That from the distance sparkle through
 Some woodland gap,—and of a sky above,
 Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are link'd with thee ;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
 Who from the dark old tree,
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
 And I, secure in childish piety,
Listen'd as if I heard an angel sing
 With news from heaven, which he did bring
 Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
 When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.



TO THE DANDELION

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

An American Poet.

THE common flower, that grow'st beside the
way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer blossoms here.

Gold such as thine we'er dewy find
Through the primeval bush and thicket
Nor wrinkled &

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art !
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

SONNET.

WHEN the lark carols to the summer morn,
Soaring through purple clouds on buoyant wing ;
When the coy partridge, from the ripening corn,
Starts if the breeze a passing murmur fling ;
That sighing breeze, which wafts the spangling dew
From the blue wind-flower and the heather-bell,
Invites my muse her wanderings to pursue
O'er mossy lawn, thick wood, or tangled dell ;
Or when the water-lily—silver flower,
Peeps from the green leaves on the silent lake ;
When contemplation steals away the hour,
And all is peace ;—but memory yet will wake,
And lead me from the lovely tranquil scene,
To muse with fondness on what once has been !

S. R.

VIOLETS.

I do love violets.
They tell a history of woman's love ;
They open with the earliest breath of spring ;
Lead a sweet life of perfume, dew, and light,
And if they perish, perish with a sigh
Delicious as that life. On the hot June
They shed no perfume ; the flow'rs may remain,
But the rich breathing of their leaves is past ;
Like woman, they have lost their loveliest gift
When yielding to the fiery hour of passion.
—The violet-breath of love is purity.

MISS LONDON.

MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the East, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green-lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, thou dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire ;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our earliest song,
And welcome thee and wish thee long.

MILTON.



SPRING CROCUSES.

MARY HOWITT.

"The vernal crocus in the neighbourhood of Nottingham presents a most beautiful appearance, covering with its bloom many acres of meadow, rivalling whatever has been sung of the fields of Enna ; showing at a distance like a field of lilac, and tempting every merry little heart, and many graver ones also, to go out and gather."

*Naturalist's Calendar for Time's Telescope
for 1827, by JOHN HOWITT.*



NOT to cold-hearted, weary care,
Give up the soul, a votary won !
Come now, a simple pleasure seize—
Where a thousand thousand crocuses
Are shining in the sun.

* * * * *

And from the dim and treeless town
The little children have gone forth,
Running and leaping, happy bands,
With little baskets in their hands,
And hearts brimful of mirth.

And darkly pondering on the past,
Slowly have come down aged men;
Feeble with years, and bent, and hoar,
To gaze upon the flowers once more,
Never to gaze again.

Here come the children of the poor,
Leaving their early cares behind,
Gamesome as the wild forest herd,
And free as is the mountain bird,
Or as the mountain wind.

* * * * *

The little infant! 'mong the grass
Sits, gaily singing to itself:
Until comes out a gaudy fly,
Or a small bee goes humming by,
Then shouts the merry elf.

Ay, sing unto the lark above ye,
And freely wander where ye list,
And glean up from the abounding earth,
Strong joy, and rosy health, and mirth,
Good gifts too often missed.

* * * * *

And God sent flowers to beautify
The earth, and cheer man's careful mood,
And he is happiest who has power,
To gather wisdom from a flower,
And wake his heart in every hour,
To pleasant gratitude.

THE SNOWDROP.

THE snowdrop is the herald of the flowers,
Sent with its small white flag of truce to plead
For its beleaguered brethren ; suppliantly,
It prays stern winter to withdraw his troop
Of winds and blustering storms ; and having won
A smile of promise from his pitying face,
Returns to tell the issue of its errand,
To the expectant host.

WESTWOOD.

LONE flower, hemm'd in with snows, and white as they,
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day
Storms, sallying from the mountain tops, way-lay
The rising sun, and on the plains descend ;
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend
Whose zeal outruns his promise ! Blue-eyed May
Shall soon behold this border thickly set
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing
On the soft west wind and his frolic peers ;
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,
Chaste snowdrop, venturous harbinger of Spring,
And pensive monitor of fleeting years !

WORDSWORTH.

THE PRIMROSE.

Ask me why I send you here,
This firstling of the infant year
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose all bepearl'd with dew;
I straight will whisper in your ears,
The sweets of love are wash'd with tears.

Ask me why this flower doth show
So yellow, green, and sickly too;
Ask me why the stalk is weak,
And bending, yet it doth not break;
I must tell you, these discover
What doubts and fears are in a lover.

CAREW.

To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WORDSWORTH.





LESSONS FROM THE GORSE.

MOUNTAIN gorses, ever golden,
Canker'd not the whole year long,
Do ye teach us to be strong,
Howsoever prick'd and holden,
Like your thorned blooms, and so
Trodden on by rain and snow,
Along the hillside of this life, as bleak as where ye
grow?

Mountain blossoms, shining blossoms,
Do ye teach us to be glad
When no summer can be had,
Blooming in our inward bosoms,—
Ye whom God preserveth still,
Set as lights upon a hill,
A token to the wintry earth, that Beauty liveth
still!

Mountain gorses, do ye teach us,
From that academic chair,
Canopied with azure air,

That the first fruit Wisdom reaches,
Hath the hue of a child's cheek ?
Ye who grow on mountain peak,
Yet grow there low along the ground, beside the grasses
meek !

Mountain gorses ! If Linnaeus
Knelt before you on the sod,
For your beauty thanking God,
Surely what ye teach should free us,
Unto prostratings anew,—
Whence arisen,—if one or two
Clear drops be on our cheeks, O World ! they are
not tears but dew.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.





TO THE BRAMBLE FLOWER.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

IHY fruit full well the schoolboy knows,
Wild bramble of the brake !
So, put thou forth thy small white rose :
I love it for his sake.
Though woodbines flaunt and roses glow
O'er all the fragrant bowers,
Thou need'st not be ashamed to show
Thy satin-threaded flowers ;
For dull the eye, the heart is dull,
That cannot feel how fair,
Amid all beauty beautiful,
Thy tender blossoms are.

How delicate thy gauzy frill !
How rich thy branchy stem !
How soft thy voice, when woods are still,
And thou sing'st hymns to them :
While silent flowers are falling slow,
And, 'mid the general hush,

A sweet air lifts the little bough,
Lone whispering through the bush !
The primrose to the grave is gone ;
The hawthorn flower is dead ;
The violet by the moss'd grey stone
Hath laid her weary head :
But thou, wild bramble, back dost bring,
In all their beauteous power,
The fresh green days of life's fair spring,
And boyhood's blossomy hour.
Scorn'd bramble of the brake ! once more
Thou bidd'st me be a boy,
To gad with thee the woodlands o'er
In freedom and in joy.





MAY-DAY IN NEW ENGLAND.

CAN this be May? can this be May?
We have not found a flower to-day?
We roamed the wood, we climbed the hill,
We rested by the rushing rill;
And lest they had forgot the day,
We told them it was May—dear May!
We called the sweet wild blooms by name;
We shouted, but no answer came
From smiling field or solemn hill,
From rugged rock or rushing rill:
We only bade the pretty pets
Just breathe from out their hiding-places;
We told the little light coquettes
They needn't show their bashful faces;
“One sigh,” we said, “one fragrant sigh,
Will soon discover where you lie.”
The roguish things were still as death,
They would not even breathe a breath.
Alas! there's none so deaf, I fear,
As those who do not choose to hear.

We wandered to an open place,
And sought the sunny buttercup,
That, so delighted, in your face
Just like a pleasant smile looks up.
We peeped into a shady spot
To find the blue "forget-me-not."
At last a far-off voice we heard,
A voice as of a fountain fall,
That softer than a singing bird
Did answer to our merry call.
So wildly sweet the breezes brought
That tone in every pause of ours,
That we, delighted, fondly thought
It must be talking of the flowers.
We knew the violets loved to hide
The cool and lulling wave beside.
With song, and laugh, and bounding feet,
And wild hair wandering on the wind,
We swift pursued the murmurs sweet,
But not a blossom could we find.
The cowslip, crocus, columbine,
The violet and the snowdrop fine,
The orchis 'neath the hawthorn tree,
The bluebell and anemone,
The wild rose, eglantine, and daisy,
Where are they all? they must be lazy!
Perhaps they're playing "hide and seek."
Oh, naughty flowers, why don't you speak?
We have not found a flower to-day,—
They surely cannot know 'tis May.

You have not found a flower to-day ?
What's that upon your cheek, I pray ?
A blossom pure, and sweet, and wild,
And worth all nature's blooming wealth :
Not all in vain your search, my child !
You've found at least the rose of health.
The golden buttercup, you say,
That like a smile illumines the way,
Is nowhere to be seen to-day.
Fair child, upon that beaming face
A softer, lovelier smile I trace ;
A treasure as the sunshine bright,
A glow of love and wild delight.
Then pine no more for nature's toy ;
Yes, in a heart so young and gay
And kind as yours 'tis always May ;
For gentle feelings, love, are flowers
That bloom through life's most clouded hours.
Ah ! cherish them, my happy child,
And check the weeds that wander wild ;
And while their stainless wealth is given
In incense sweet to earth and heaven,
No longer will you need to say,
" Can this be May ? can this be May ? "

MRS. OSGOOD.



MIMOSA, EMATIV, A. M. 1800-22

SWEETBRIAR.

THE shower
Wets not a rose that buds in beauty's bower
One half so lovely as the sweetbriar ;
* * * For it grows along
The poor man's pathway, by the poor man's door.

BRAINERD.

THE COWSLIP.

THE cowslip, that bending
With its golden bells,
Of each glad hour's ending
With a sweet chime tells.

MISS LONDON.

THE hyacinth for constancy,
Wi' its unchanging blue.

BURNS.

THE VIOLET.

SHE comes—the first, the fairest thing
That heaven upon the earth doth fling
Ere winter's star has set :
She dwells behind 'her leafy screen,
And gives as angels give—unseen—
The violet.

BARRY CORNWALL.



A BOY'S SONG.

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.



HERE the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.



THE FLOWERS IN OUR WAY.

HIS life is a garden of flowers,
That we rudely despoil on our way,
And joy would enliven the hours,
If we dimm'd not the light of its ray ;
Earth smiles with abundance around,
Though we see not the plenty it bears,
For whatever with bliss may abound,
We o'ershadow by sadness and tears.

If the heart is attuned to repose,
And the eye can see charms where it roams,
We shall find a true pleasure in those
Who hallow the hearth of our homes.
Each voice would awake us to mirth,
Their glances invite us to love,
Until all we regarded on earth,
Reflected would seem from above.

WILLIAM JONES.

MORNING WITH THE FLOWERS.

GERALD MASSEY.




HE breath of dawn brought God's good morning
kiss

To bud and leaf and flower, and human hearts
That like pond-lilies open heavenward eyes.
Sweet lilies of the valley, tremulous fair,
Peep through their curtains claspt with diamond dew
By faëry jewellers working while they slept :
The arch laburnum droops her budding gold
From emerald fingers, with such taking grace ;
The fuchsia fires her fairy chandelier,
And flowering currant crimsons the green gloom :
The pansies, pretty little puritans,
Come peering up with merry closed eyes :
At summer's call the lily is alight ;
Wallflowers in fragrance burn themselves away
With the sweet season on her precious pyre ;
Pure passionate aromas of the rose,
And purple perfume of the hyacinth,
Come like a colour through the golden sky.

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS.

MARY HOWITT.

ERE I come creeping, creeping everywhere
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere
All around the open door,
Where sit the aged poor,
Here where the children play,
In the bright merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
In the noisy city street,
My pleasant face you'll meet
Cheering the sick at heart,
Toiling his busy part,
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
You cannot see me coming,
You hear my low sweet humming ;

The Voice of the Grass.

71

For in the starry night,
And the glad morning light,
I come, quietly creeping everywhere.

* * * * *

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
When you're numbered with the dead
In your still and narrow bed,
In the happy spring I'll come,
And deck your silent home,
Creeping silently, creeping everywhere.



DAISY.

"Whose white investments figure innocence."

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN, smitten by the morning ray,
I see thee rise, alert and gay,
Then, cheerful flower, my spirits play
With kindred gladness.

And when, at dark, by dews opprest,
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.

WORDSWORTH.

BOUQUET.

PLEASURES are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed.

BURNS.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts,
Of friends, however humble, scorn not one;
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun.

WORDSWORTH.

WEARIED infants on earth's gentle breeze,
In every nook the little wild flowers slept.

LORD LYTTON.



FLOWERS THE LAST OFFERING OF LOVE.

WITH fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor
The leaf of eglantine, which, not to slander,
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath; the ruddock* would
With charitable bill, bring thee all this;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.

SHAKESPEARE.

* Redbreast.



THE YELLOW VIOLET.



HEN beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the blue-bird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below

Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
Alone is in the virgin air.

Of all her train, the hands of Spring,
First plant thee in the watery mould
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

The Yellow Violet.

Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh.

Oft, in the sunless April day,
Thy early smile has stayed my walk ;
But 'midst the gorgeous blooms of May,
I passed thee on thy humble stalk.

So they, who climb to wealth, forget
The friends in darker fortunes tried,
I copied them—but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light,
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright.

BRYANT.





THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of
the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and
meadows brown and sear.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves
lie dead ;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's
tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs
the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the
gloomy day :

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately
sprang and stood
In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of
flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good
of ours.

The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the briar-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sunflower by the brook in autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream
no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty
died,
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my
side :
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast
the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so
brief :
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend
of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.



THE FURZE.

ON me such beauty Summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers ;
And when the frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay,
That you might look on me and say,
This plant can never die.
The butterfly, all green and gold,
To me hath often flown,
Here in my blossoms to behold,
Wings lovely as his own.

WORDSWORTH.



LOWLY PLEASURES.

BARRY CORNWALL.

METHINKS I love all common things ;
The common air, the common flower,
The dear kind common thought that springs
From hearts that have no other dower,
No other wealth, no other power,
Save love ; and will not that repay
For all else fortune tears away ?

Methinks I love the horny hand
That labours until dusk from dawn ;
Methinks I love the russet band,
Beyond the band of silk or lawn ;
And oh ! the lovely laughter drawn
From peasant lips, when sunny May
Leads in some flowery holiday !

What good are fancies fair that rack
With painful thought the poet's brain ?
Alas ! they cannot bear us back
Unto happy years again !
But the pure white rose without stain
Bringeth times and thoughts of flowers,
When youth was bounteous as the hours :

E'en now, were I but rich, my hand
Should open like a vernal cloud,
When 't casts its beauty on a land
In music sweet but never loud :
But I am of the humble crowd ,
And thus am I content to be,
If thou, sweet muse, wilt cherish me.



NATURE'S VOICES.

THE leaf-tongues of the forest, the flower lips of the sod ;
The happy birds that hymn their rapture in the ear of
God,
The summer wind that bringeth music over land and sea,
Have each a voice that singeth this sweet song of songs
to me :
This world is full of beauty, like other worlds above,
And, if we did our duty, it might be full of love.

GERALD MASSEY.

FLOWERS.

FLOWERS are holy things—the poet ever
Proud to his kind hath bent the knee to them;
And often when his hand hath dared to sever
One of those heavenly children from its stem,
His soul has wept, to think that it could never
Back to the casket give life's stolen gem,
Weeping that love which prompted him to seize,
As o'er dead Hylas wept the Naiades.

JOHN GRAHAM.



FLOWERS.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

* * * * 'Tis and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely and all die
Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank,
And not reproached me; the ever sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoil'd nor lost one grain of gold.

A SILENT NOOK.

ONE silent nook
Was there. Even on the edge of that vast mountain
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,
It overlooked in its serenity
The dark earth, and the bending vault of stars.
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile
Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped
The fissured stones with its entwining arms,
And did embower with leaves for ever green,
And berries dark, the smooth and even space
Of its inviolated floor, and here
The children of the autumnal whirlwind bore,
In wanton sport, those bright leaves, whose decay,
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,
Rivals the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can teach
The wilds to love tranquillity.

SHELLEY.



RETROSPECTION.

TO-NIGHT she will dance at the palace,
With the diamonds in her hair ;
And the Prince will praise her beauty—
The loveliest lady there !

But tones, at times, in the music
Will bring back forgotten things
And her heart will fail her sometimes,
When her beauty is praised at the King's.

There sits in his silent chamber,
A stern and sorrowful man :
But a strange sweet dream comes to him,
While the lamp is burning wan.

Of a sunset among the vineyards
In a lone and lovely land ;
And a maiden standing near him,
With fresh wild flowers in her hand.

OWEN MEREDITH.

NATURE'S HARMONY OF COLOURING.

ART thou a colourist? Mark how yon red
Poppy, and that bright patch of yellow bloom,
Cliff-borne above green depths and purple gloom,
Like spark and blaze on smiling darkness shed,
Give and take beauty! Mark, too, over head,
How the rich verdure of this ancient tree,
And the deep purple of the bank agree,
To thrive in partnership! And while the bed
Of the clear stream, through tints of every hue,
Lifts its bathed pebbles, lo! to brighten all
The little harebell brings its bit of blue,
And is a gainer; happy to behold
Red blessing green, and purple gilding gold,—
Of light and shade a marriage festival!

E. ELLIOTT.





YOUTH RENEWED.



SPRING flowers, spring birds, spring breezes,
Are felt, and heard, and seen ;
Light trembling transport seizes
My heart,—with sighs between ;
These old enchantments fill the wind
With scenes and seasons left behind ;—
Childhood, its smiles and tears,
Youth, with its flush of years,
Its morning clouds and dewy prime,
More exquisitely tinged by time !

Fancies again are springing,
Like May flowers in the vales ;
While hopes long lost, are singing,
From thorns, like nightingales ;
And kindly spirits stir my blood,
Like vernal airs that curb the flood
There falls to manhood's lot,
A joy which youth has not.
A dream more beautiful than truth,
Returning spring,—renewing youth !

Thus sweetly to surrender,
The present for the past,
In sprightly mood yet tender,
Life's burthen down to cast,—
This is to taste from stage to stage,
Youth, or the lees refined of age ;
Like wine well kept and long,
Heady, nor harsh, nor strong ;—
A richer, purer, mellow draught
With every annual cup is quaffed.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.



FLOWERS.

As skylarks love the clouded sky,
Where bees and flowers are, there am I,
Who loves not flowers ? I know not who :
But this I know, most good folks do.
No foe of flowers could I forgive ;
They are my life, in them I live ;
But oh ! there's frailty in their beauty,
How mutely making sadness duty.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.



FLOWERS OF THE HEART.

FLOWERS! winter flowers! the child is dead!
The mother cannot speak:
Oh, softly couch its little head,
Or Mary's heart will break.
Amid those curls of flaxen hair
This pale pink ribbon twine,
And on the little bosom there
Place this wan lock of mine.
How like a form in cold white stone
The coffin'd infant lies!
Look, mother, on thy little one,
And tears will fill thine eyes.
She cannot weep—more pale she grows,
More deadly pale and still;
Flowers! oh, a flower! a winter rose,
That tiny hand to fill.
Go, search the fields! the lichen wet
Bends o'er the unfailing well;
Beneath the furrow lingers yet
The scarlet pimpernel.
Peeps not a snowdrop in the bower,
Where never froze the spring?

A daisy?—ah, bring childhood's flower !
The half-blown daisy bring !
Yes, lay the daisy's little head
Beside this little cheek ;
Oh, haste ; the last of five is dead :
The childless cannot speak !

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.



A BOUQUET.

HYACINTHS, ringing their soft bells,
To call the bees from the anemones,
Jealous of their bright rivals' glowing wealth.

L. E. L.

THE sensitive plant, the earliest
Upgathered unto the bosom of rest,
A sweet child, weary of its delight,
The feeblest, and yet the favourite,
Cradled within the embrace of night.

SHELLEY.



THE WATCHER BY THE WAYSIDE.

NEVER DESPAIR.

THE traveller in Switzerland a floweret oft may see,
That richly by the wayside blooms, uncultured,
wild and free;

It lifts its modest little head, and turns its calm blue
eye—

Bright as the stars that peep at eve from out a clouded
sky—

With such a gay and cheerful glance to every passer-by.

Not in the garden's shelter'd nook is its fair presence
found,

Where order smiles on every group, and sister flowers
abound;

Along the hot and dusty road, where all looks dry and
bare,

With glad contentedness it takes its lowly station there,
And willingly its fragrance flings upon the summer air.

Expressive is the German name our favourite has obtain'd,
The "Watcher by the Wayside" is the title it has gain'd ;
And beautiful to us appears the mission it fulfils,
And hallow'd are the teachings which it silently instils
In hearts that sometimes droop and sigh because of life's stern ills.

While traversing our toilsome path, far from our home and rest,
By varied roughnesses and cares sore burden'd and depress'd,
How often on our aching sight some cheering promise beams,
Or some unlook'd-for favour in the waste around us gleams !
And in a moment, oh, how changed the road before us seems !





THE SMALL CELANDINE.

THERE is a flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and
rain ;

And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this flower I pass'd,
And recognised it, though an alter'd form,
Now standing forth, an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd, and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
" It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold :"
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;
It cannot help itself in its decay ;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue,
And, in my spleen, I smiled **that it was grey.**

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot !
O man, that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things youth needed not !

WORDSWORTH.



COMPARISON.

THOSE withered leaves along the cold ground spread,
Did once the sweetest of all flowers compose ;
And though full many a sun hath seen them shed,
'They still are odorous as the living rose.
So breathes the memory of departed worth,
When years have mourned it in the silent tomb ;
There is a fragrance in the holy earth
Where virtue sleeps, that time cannot consume.
The good man dies, but with his parting breath
Bequeaths the world a sweet that knows no death.

TO THE DAISY.

BRIGHT flower! whose home is everywhere,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
Of joy or sorrow;
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that man is soon deprest?
A thoughtless thing! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,
Or on his reason,
And thou wouldst teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind,
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
In peace fulfilling.

WORDSWORTH.



EARLY FLOWERS.

THE tribes of early flowerets,
How beautiful they seem,
Like stars that come at sunset,
Or fairies in a dream !
To music of the spring-tide
They dance along the plain,
And wile, with sunny gladness
The Summer back again.

This earth, esteem'd a wilderness,
Is made all Eden-bright,
With these her holy offspring,
Creations of the light ;
As though some gentle angel,
Commission'd love to bear,
Had wander'd o'er the greensward,
And left its footprints there.

Wherever rests the human eye,
These infant glories spring,
As though a blessing to the heart
Of man they sought to bring ;

Early Flowers.

A blessing from the Great One,
Who gives such lovely flowers,
Bright revelations of Himself,
To senseless hearts of ours.

The tribes of early flowerets,
Like holy thoughts enshrined,
An altar to the unseen God
They raise in every mind;
The hills and everlasting skies
In grandeur have their birth,
But the early flowerets only
His image bring to earth.

C. L. BANKS.



SPRING.

THE Spring is here—the delicate-footed May,
With its slight fingers full of leaves and flowers ;
And with it comes a thirst to be away,
Wasting in wood-paths its voluptuous hours—
A feeling that is like a sense of wings,
Restless to soar above these perishing things.

We pass out from the city's feverish hum,
To find refreshment in the silent woods ;
And nature that is beautiful and dumb,
Like a cool sleep upon the pulses broods ;
Yet, even there, a restless thought will steal
To teach the indolent heart it still must feel.

Strange, that the audible stillness of the noon,
The waters tripping with their silver feet,
The turning to the light of leaves in June,
And the light whisper as their edges meet,
Strange, that they fill not with their tranquil tone,
The spirit walking in their midst alone.

There's no contentment in a world like this,
Save in forgetting the immortal dream ;
We may not gaze upon the stars of bliss,
That through the cloud-rifts radiantly stream
Bird-like, the prison'd soul will lift its eye
And pine till it is hooded from the sky.

N. P. WILLIS.



FLOWERS OF THE FIELD.

SWEET nurslings of the vernal skies,
Bathed in soft airs and fed with dew,
What more than magic in you lies
To fill the heart's fond view !
In childhood's sports companions gay ;
In sorrow, on life's downward way,
How soothing ! in our last decay
Memorials prompt and true.

Relics ye are of Eden's bowers,
As pure, as fragrant, and as fair
As when ye crown'd the sunshine hours,
Of happy wanderers there.
Fallen all beside, the world of life,
How is it stained with fear and strife !
In reason's world what storms are rife,
What passions rage and glare !

Ye fearless in your nests abide,
Nor may we scorn, too proudly wise,
Your silent lessons, undescried
By all but lowly eyes.





For ye could draw th' admiring gaze
Of Him who worlds and hearts surveys :
Your order wild, your fragrant maze,
 He taught us how to prize.

* * * * *

Alas ! of thousand bosoms kind,
 That daily court you and caress,
How few the happy secret find,
 Of your calm loveliness !
Live for to-day ; to-morrow's light
To-morrow's cares shall bring to sight,
Go sleep like closing flowers at night,
 And Heaven thy morn will bless.

KEBLE.





FIELD FLOWERS.

CAMPBELL.

YE field flowers! the gardens eclipse you, 'tis true,
Yet, wildings of nature, I doat upon you ;
For ye waft me to summers of old,
When the earth teemed around me with fairy delight,
And when daisies and buttercups gladdened my sight,
Like treasures of silver and gold.

I love you for lulling me back into dreams
Of the blue Highland mountains and echoing streams,
And of birchen glades breathing their balm ;
While the deer was seen glancing in sunshine remote,
And the deep mellow crush of the wood-pigeon's note
Made music that sweetened the calm.

Not a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune
Than ye speak to my heart, little wildings of June ;
Of old ruinous castles ye tell :
I thought it delightful your beauties to find
When the magic of nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of her spell.

Even now what affections the violet awakes !
What loved little islands, twice seen in their lakes,
 Can the wild water-lily restore.
What landscapes I read in the primrose's looks,
What pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks,
 In the vetches that tangle the shore.

Earth's cultureless buds ! to my heart ye were dear
Ere the fever of passion, or ague of fear,
 Had scathed my existence's bloom ;
Once I welcome you more, in life's passionless stage,
With the visions of youth to revisit my age,
 And I wish you to grow on my tomb.

—*New Monthly Magazine.*





THE FLOWER.

FLOWER upon the green hill side,
Thou, to shun the threatening blast,
In the grass thy head dost hide,
By the tempest overpast.
Then to greet the azure skies,
And to feel the soothing sun,
Brighter, sweeter thou dost rise,—
Tell me, flow'r, how this is done?"

"I will tell thee, as thy friend,
Artless, timid, whispering low:
To the blast 'tis good to bend—
He who made me taught me so!
While His teaching I obey,
I but fall to rise and stand
Brighter for the stormy day,
Leaning on His viewless hand.

"When to Him I've lowly bow'd,
He with freshness fills my cup
From the angry scowling cloud:
Then He gently lifts me up.

So I fall, and so I rise :
In the dark or sunny hour,
Minding Him who rules the skies !—
He's my God, and I'm His flower !”

From an American Annual.



STANZAS.

I NEVER cast a flower away,
The gift of one who cared for me ;
A little flower—a faded flower,
But it was done reluctantly.

I never looked a last adieu
To things familiar, but my heart
Shrank with a feeling, almost pain,
Even from their lifelessness to part.

I never spoke the word “ Farewell !”
But with an utterance faint and broken
An earth-sick yearning for the time
When it shall never more be spoken.

—*Blackwood's Magazine.*



LESSONS SWEET OF SPRING.



LESSONS sweet of Spring returning,

Welcome to the thoughtful heart !

May I call ye sense or learning,

Instinct pure, or Heaven-taught art ?

Be your title what it may,

Sweet the lengthening April day,

While with you the soul is free,

Ranging wild o'er hill and lea.

Soft as Memnon's harp at morning,

To the inward ear devout,

Touch'd by light, with heavenly warning

Your transporting chords ring out.

Every leaf in every nook,

Every wave in every brook,

Chanting with a solemn voice,

Mind us of our better choice.

Needs no show of mountain hoary,

Winding shore or deepening glen,

Where the landscape in its glory

Teaches truth to wandering men.

Give true hearts but earth and sky,
And some flowers to bloom and die,—
Homely scenes and simple views
Lowly thoughts may best infuse.

See the soft green willow springing
Where the waters gently pass,
Ev'ry way her free arms flinging
O'er the moist and reedy grass.
Long ere winter's blasts are fled,
See her tipp'd with vernal red,
And her kindly flower display'd
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
Patiently she droops awhile,
But when showers and breezes hail her,
Wears again her winning smile.
Thus I learn Contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower,
Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven may give.

KEBLE.



THE DYING MAIDEN.



OD, release our dying sister !
Beauteous blight hath sadly kiss'd her :
Whiter than the wild white roses,
Famine in her face discloses
Mute submission, patience holy,
Passing fair, but passing slowly.

"Though," she said, "you know I'm dying,"
(In her heart green trees are sighing ;
Not of them hath pain bereft her,
In the city where we left her,)
"Bring," she said, "a hedge-side blossom !"
Love shall lay it on her bosom.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.





FLOWERS.

FROM ELLIOTT'S "SPIRITS AND MEN."

SWEET flowers! remembered well, your lives,
your breath,
Call up the dead to combat still with death;
The spirits of my buried past arise:
Again a child, where childhood roved I run;
While groups of speedwell, with their bright blue eyes,
Like happy children, cluster in the sun.
Still the wan primrose hath a golden lore;
The milfoil, thousand-leaf'd as heretofore,
Displays a little world of flowerets gay;
And tiny maids might hither come to cull
The red-mark'd cowslip of the dewy May;
And still the fragrant thorn is beautiful.

THE flowers are Nature's jewels, with whose wealth
She decks her summer beauty; primrose sweet,
With blossoms of pure gold; enchanting rose,
That like a virgin queen salutes the sun
Dew-diadem'd——

G. CROLY.

IN all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons
How akin they are to human things;
And with child-like, credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand,
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

LONGFELLOW.



TO THE CROCUS.

LOWLY, sprightly little flower !
Herald of a brighter bloom,
Bursting in a sunny hour
From thy winter tomb.

Hues you bring, bright, gay, and tender,
As if never to decay ;
Fleeting in their varied splendour—
Soon, alas ! it fades away

Thus the hopes I long had cherished,
Thus the friends I long had known,
One by one, like you have perished :
Blighted I must fade alone.

PATTERSON.



THE VIOLET'S SPRING SONG.

UNDER the hedge all safe and warm,
Sheltered from boisterous wind and storm,
We violets lie;
With each small eye
Closely shut while the cold goes by.

You look at the bank, 'mid the biting frost,
And you sigh and say that we're dead and lost;
But, lady, stay
For a sunny day,
And you'll find us again alive and gay.

On mossy banks, under forest trees,
You'll find us crowding, in days like these;
Purple and blue,
And white ones too,
Peep at the sun and wait for you.

By maids and matrons, by old and young,
By rich and poor our praise is sung;
And the blind man sighs
When his sightless eyes
He turns to the spot where our perfumes rise.

There is not a garden the country through,
Where they plant not violets white and blue;
 By princely hall
 And cottage small—
For we're sought and cherished, and culled by all.

Yet grand parterres, and stiff trimmed beds,
But ill become our modest heads;
 We'd rather run,
 In shadow and sun,
O'er the banks where our merry lives begun.

'Here, where the birken bough's silvery shine
Gleams over the hawthorn and frail woodbine,
 Moss, deep and green,
 Lies, thick, between
The plots where we violet-flowers are seen.

And the small gay celandine's stars of gold
Rise sparkling beside our purple's fold :—
 Such a regal show
 Is rare, I trow,
Save on the banks where violets grow.

L. A. TWAMLEY.



COWSLIPS.



H ! fragrant dwellers of the lea,
When first the wildwood rings
With each sound of vernal minstrelsy,
When fresh the green grass springs !

What can the blessed spring restore
More gladdening than your charms ?
Bringing the memory once more
Of lovely fields and farms !

Of thickets, breezes, birds, and flowers ;
Of life's unfolding prime ;
Of thoughts as cloudless as the hours ;
Of souls without a crime.

Oh ! blessed, blessed do ye seem,
For, even now, I turned
With soul athirst for wood and stream,
From streets that glared and burned.

From the hot town, where mortal care
His crowded fold doth pen ;
Where stagnates the polluted air
In many a sultry den.

Cowslips.

And are ye here? and are ye here?
Drinking the dew like wine,
'Midst living gales and waters clear,
And heaven's unstinted shine.

I care not that your little life
Will quickly have run through,
And the sward with summer children rife,
Keep not a trace of you.

For again, again, on dewy plain,
I trust to see you rise,
When spring renews the wildwood strain,
And bluer gleam the skies.

Again, again, when many springs
Upon my grave shall shine,
Here shall you speak of vanished things,
To living hearts of mine.

MARY HOWITT.





RAGGED ROBIN.



MAN of taste is Robinet,
A dandy, spruce and trim !
Whoe'er would dainty fashions set,
Should go and look at him.

Rob scorns to wear his crimson coat,
As common people do,
He folds and fits it in and out,
And does it bravely, too.

Oh! Robin loves to prank him rare,
With fringe, and flounce, and all ;
Till you'd take him for a lady fair
Just going to a ball.

Robin's a roguish, merry lad,
He dances in the breeze,
And looks up, with a greeting glad,
To the rustling hedge-row trees.

Ragged Robin.

How civilly he beckons in
The busy Mrs. Bee;
And she tells her store of gossiping
O'er his honey and his glee.

All joy—all mirth—no carking care,
No worldly woe has he;
Alack! I wish my lot it were
To live as happily!

L. A. TWAMLEY.





THE POOR MAN'S FLOWERS.

AROUND the rich man's trellised bower,
Gay, costly creepers run :
The poor man has his scarlet-beans
To screen him from the sun. ,

And there before the little bench
O'ershadowed by the bower,
Grow southernwood and lemon-thyme,
Sweet-pea and gillyflower ;

And pinks and clove-carnations
Rich scented, side by side ;
And at each end a hollyhock,
With an edge of London-pride.

And here on Sabbath evenings,
Until the stars are out,
With a little one in either hand
He walketh all about.

The Poor Man's Flowers.

For, though his garden-plot is small,
Him doth it satisfy ;
For there's no inch of all his ground
That does not fill his eye.

It is not with the rich man thus ;
For, though his grounds are wide,
He looks beyond, and yet beyond,
With soul unsatisfied.

MARY HOWITT.





SPRING VOICES.

PUBLISHED IN "NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ."

COME forth, come forth ! it were a sin
To stay at home to-day !
Stay no more loitering within,
Come to the woods away !

The long green grass is filled with flowers,
The clover's deep dim red
Is brighten'd with the morning showers
That on the winds have fled.

Scatter'd about the deep blue skv
In white and flying clouds,
Some bright brief rains are all that lie
Within those snowy shrouds.

Now, look !— our weather-glass is spread —
The pimpernel, whose flower
Closes its leaves of spotted red
Against a rainy hour.

That first pale green is on the trees ;
That verdure more like bloom ;
Yon elm-bough hath a horde of bees,
Lured by the faint perfume.

The cherry orchard flings on high
Its branches, whence are strown
Blossoms like snow, but with an eye
Dark, maiden, as thine own !

As yet our flowers are chiefly those
Which fill the sun-touch'd bough ;
Within the sleeping soil repose
Those of the radiant brow.

But we have daisies, which, like love
Or hope, spring everywhere ;
And primroses, which droop above
Some self-consuming care.

So sad, so spiritual, so pale,
Born all too near the snow,
They pine for that sweet southern gale,
Which they will never know.

It is too soon for deeper shade ;
But let us skirt the wood,
The blackbird there, whose nest is made,
Sits singing to her brood.

These pleasant hours will soon be flown ;
Love ! make no more delay—
I am too glad to be alone,
Come forth with me to-day.

PROFESSOR WILSON.

NATURE.

FATHER,

My heart is awed within me, when I think
Of the great miracle, which still goes on,
In silence round me—the perpetual world
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
For ever. Written in thy work I read
The lessons of my own eternity.
Tho' all grow old and die ; but see again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses, ever gay and beautiful youth,
In all its beautiful forms.


* * * *

Oh there is not lost
One of earth's charms ; upon her bosom yet
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies,
And yet shall live.

BRYANT.



THE DEATH OF SPRING.

 HE came with the primrose wreathed
In the folds of her sunny hair :—
Where late the snowdrop breathed
Its white life forth to the absorbing air,
Her step descended there.
Like a young bride, all grace, all loveliness,
She walk'd the earth ;
And where her silvery footfall deign'd to press,
Was heard the mirth
Of unimprison'd waters, gaily singing
Songs of their lucent clime,
While on their margents green her hands were flinging
Stars of an earthly firmament sublime,—
Which, like the moon, by slow degrees display,
As she to night, their fullness to the day ;—
Then die away
In gradual wane—like a dissolving chime !

The wood anemone,
And purple crocus, crown'd with burnish'd gold,
At the gnarl'd mossy root of forest tree
Her pale hands scatter'd—or in gardens cold,
With trembling daffodils
She deck'd the swelling hills ;
With velvet chalices, whence fairies sip,

She gemm'd the greensward, and each sunny slope,
Meet for an elfin lip.
Her azure eyes were seen in heaven's blue cope ;—
And where the sheen of their mild radiance fell,
The modest violet peer'd in every hamlet dell !

In valleys pastoral,
Where the white daisy dreams,
Who oped her crimson buds at Spring's dear call—
And chaste convolvuli
Entwine the hedge-rows high,
While palely gleams
Each alabaster urn, a summer's day—
And the pink eglantine
Peeps tender bud : between—
And bursting leaves their early green display :—

In such sweet vales—where music, sweeter far
Than Pan's Thessalian echoes ever heard
From throat of warbling bird,
Floats clearly to the welkin's azure bar—
Flowers of a thousand rich enamell'd dyes
Weep orient tears for the departed Spring,—
Suffuse their rainbow eyes
For her who nursed them to the blossoming !
The lily in the shade
Hides her coy head ; and mourns in vestal white,
For Spring—the season maid—
Whose requiem to pour, the woodland tribes unite.

H. W. HAYNES.



THE SUMMER-HOUSE.

GO, Mary, to the summer-house,
And sweep the wooden floor,
And light the little fire, and wash
The pretty varnish'd door ;
For there the London gentleman,
Who lately lectured here,
Will smoke a pipe with Jonathan,
And taste our home-brew'd beer.

Go, bind the dahlias, that our guest
May praise their fading dyes ;
But strip of every wither'd bloom
The flower that won the prize !
And take thy father's knife, and prune
The roses that remain :
And let the fallen hollyhock
Peep through the broken pane.

And sponge his view of Blacklowscar,
Till bright on moor and town
The painted sun and stormy crest
O'er leagues of cloud look down.

He rose at three, to work till four—
The evenings still are long—
And still for every lingering flower
The redbreast hath a song.

I'll follow in an hour or two ;
Be sure I will not fail
To bring his flute and spying glass,
The pipes and bottled ale ;
And that grand music which he made
About the child in bliss,
Our guest shall hear it sung and play'd,
And feel how grand it is !

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.



THE POOR MAN'S MAY.



SWEET May ! they tell me thou art come :
Thou art not come to me ;
I cannot spare a single hour,
Sweet May, to welcome thee.
God knows how hard I've worked this week,
To earn my children bread ;
And see, we have an empty board,—
My children are unfed.

And art thou still the same sweet May
My childhood loved so well,
When humming like a happy bee,
Along some primrose dell ;
I thought, oh ! what a lovely world
Is this, dear God has given,
And wonder'd any one should seek
For any other heaven ?

The hawthorn buds are come again,
And apple-blossoms too ;
And all the idle happy birds
May sing the long day through.
The old green lane awakes once more,
And looks, perhaps, for me ;
Alas ! green lane, my heart may die—
I cannot come to thee.

JOHN SAUNDERS.



THE SONG OF THE BUTTERFLY.



COME from bowers of lilacs gay,
With honeysuckles blending ;
And many a spray of willows gray,
Above the waters bending.

I flutter by the river side,
Where laves the swan his bosom ;
And o'er the open common wide,
Where yellow ragworts blossom.

Away on downy pinions borne,
With many a happy rover,
I skim above the rustling corn,
And revel in the clover.

I laugh to see the frugal bee,
For others hoard her treasure ;
From morn till night a toiler she,
But mine's a life of pleasure.

* * * * *

124 *The Song of the Butterfly.*

And when the bee is in her cell,
And shrill-tongued cricket calling,
I sleep within the lily's bell
Whilst nightly damps are falling.

There round my clean white-sheeted bed
Are pearly dewdrops distilling ;
And nightingales above my head
Their sweetest notes are trilling,

I dance, I play, make love, and sleep,
This is my whole employment ;
For men may smile or men may weep,
My life is all enjoyment.

J. R. WITHERS.

(*A Cambridgeshire Labourer.*)





ON RECEIVING A BASKET OF VIOLETS
IN WAX.

WHERE, oh where do the violets dwell ?
Sweet April breeze, I pray thee, tell !
Thou hast wandered far over vale and glen,
Ere thou hast entered the haunts of men ;
Thou hast breathed on the wealth of the spring's young
green,
Through sunlit valleys thy path has been,
Through copses where last year's leaves lie still,
Where the brambles dip in the wandering rill,
O'er wide green meadows, o'er bleak hillside—
Tell me, sweet breeze, where do violets hide ?

Down some quiet glen where the moss is dæp ;
At a gray rock's foot where the lichens creep ;
Under branches gemmed with the morning dew ;
In a bower of leaves which the sun glints through ;
'Mong the thick gnarled roots of an old oak-tree,
Unvisited save by some wandering bee ;

'Mid the deep wood-silence, unbroken all day,
Save by babbling brook or rustling spray,
Like a gem in the shade of its deep leaves set,
You may find the coy sweet violet !

Alas for me ! I may not go
Where the wild fern bends to the waters' flow !
Chained are the steps that would gladly roam
In the track of the breeze to the violet's home.
I dwell 'mid the tide of eddying life ;
The very air with its sound is rife :
I may not leave these streets and walls
For lone wood-dells and water-falls ;
So, deep in its own sweet verd'rous gloom,
Unseen by me, must the violet bloom !

Yet have I violets ! See my prize !
Purple and white, with their golden eyes !
Violets vying with Nature's best,
Tenderly set in a mossy nest !
Better in this, than these dainty flowers
Fade not away with the fleeting hours ;
But their beauty will last with the fancy they raise,
Through rain, and tempest, and wintry days.
Then thanks, warm thanks, to the skilful hand,
And tenfold thanks to the heart that planned
This graceful gift ! So these flowers shall be.
Ever a source of sweet thoughts to me ;
And though storms blow wildly, and skies are drear,
Shall bring dreams of spring-time through all the year !

F. S. H.



THE LOVE OF FLOWERS.



LOWERS ! flowers ! bright, merry-faced flowers !

I bless ye in joy or saddened hours !

I love ye dearly,

Ye look so cheerly.

In Summer, Autumn, Winter, or Spring,

A flower is to me the loveliest thing

That hath its birth

On this chequered earth :—

Oh ! who will not chorus the lay I sing !

Flowers ! flowers ! who loveth them not ?

Who hath his childhood's sports forgot ?

When daisies white,

And king-cups bright,

And snowdrops, cowslips, and daffodils,

Lured us to meadows and woods and rills ;

And we wandered on,

Till a wreath was won

Of the heather-bells crowning the far-off hills !

L. A. TWAMLEY.



THE USE OF FLOWERS.



OD might have bade the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree, and the cedar tree,
Without a flower at all.

He might have made enough, enough,
For every want of ours;
For luxury, medicine, and toil,
And yet have made no flowers.

The ore within the mountain mine
Requireth none to grow,
Nor doth it need the lotus flower
To make the river flow.

The clouds might give abundant rain,
The nightly dews might fall,
And the herb that keepeth life in man
Might yet have drunk them all.

Then wherefore, wherefore were they made
All dyed with rainbow light,
All fashion'd with supremest grace,
Up springing day and night—

Springing in valleys green and low,
And on the mountains high,
And in the silent wilderness,
Where no man passeth by?

Our outward life requires them not,
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth;

To whisper hope—to comfort man
Whene'er his faith is dim;
For whoso careth for the flowers
Will care much more for Him!

MARY HOWITT.



TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

THOU blossom bright with autumn dew,
And coloured with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

BRYANT.

INNOCENT CHILD AND SNOW-WHITE
FLOWER.

INNOCENT child and snow-white flower!
Well are ye paired in your opening hour.
Thus should the pure and the lovely meet,
Stainless with stainless, and sweet with sweet.

White as those leaves, just blown apart,
Are the folds of thy own young heart;
Guilty passion and cankering care
Never have left their traces there.

Artless one! though thou gazest now
O'er the white blossom with earnest brow,
Soon will it tire thy childish eye;
Fair as it is, thou wilt throw it by.

Throw it aside in thy weary hour,
Throw to the ground the fair white flower;
Yet, as thy tender years depart,
Keep that white and innocent heart.

BRYANT.



THE PAINTED CUP.

THE fresh savannas of the Sangamon
Here rise in gentle swells, and the long grass
Is mixed with rustling hazels. Scarlet tufts
Are glowing in the green, like flakes of fire ;
The wanderers of the prairie know them well,
And call that brilliant flower the Painted Cup.

Now if thou art a poet tell me not
That these bright chalices were tinted thus
To hold the dew for fairies, when they meet
On moonlight evenings in the hazel bowers,
And dance till they are thirsty. Call not up,
Amid this fresh and virgin solitude,
The faded fancies of an elder world ;
But leave these scarlet cups to spotted moths
Of June, and glistening flies and humming birds,
To drink from, when on all these boundless lawns
The morning sun looks hot. Or let the wind
O'rtum in sport their ruddy brims, and pour
A sudden shower upon the strawberry plant,

To swell the reddening fruit that even now
Breathes a slight fragrance from the sunny slope.

But thou art of a gayer fancy. Well—
Let then the gentle Manitou of flowers,
Lingering amid the bloomy waste he loves,
Though all his swarthy worshippers are gone—
Slender and small, his rounded cheek all brown
And ruddy with the sunshine ; let him come
On summer mornings, when the blossoms wake,
And part with little hands the spiky grass ;
And touching, with his cherry lips, the edge
Of these bright beakers, drain the gathered dew.



CHAUCER'S FLOWER.

“ WHEN the month of May
Is coming, and that I do hear the birds sing,
And that the flowers begin to spring,
Farewell my book and my devotion :
Now have I then, too, this condition,
That, of the flowers in the mead,
Then I love most those flowers, white and red,
Such that men call daisies in our town.”

Written by CHAUCER nearly 500 years ago.



DAISIES.

"The Daisy it is sweet."—CHAUCEA.

' **I** WAS when the world was in its prime,
When meadows green and woodlands wild
Were strewn with flowers, in sweet spring-time,
And everywhere the Daisies smiled :
When undisturbed the ring-doves cooed,
While lovers sang each other's praises,
As in embower'd lanes they wooed,
Or on some bank white o'er with Daisies ;
While Love went by with muffled feet,
Singing "The Daisies they are sweet."

Unfettered then he roamed abroad,
And as he willed it past the hours—
Now lingering idly by the road,
Now loitering by the wayside flowers ;
For what cared he about the morrow ?
Too young to sigh, too old to fear—

No ~~time~~ had he to think of sorrow,
Who found the Daisies everywhere,
Still sang he, through each green retreat,
"The Daisies they are very sweet."

With many a maiden did he dally,
Like a glad brook that turns away—
Here in, there out, across the valley,
With every pebble stops to play ;
Taking no note of space nor time,
Through flowers, the banks adorning,
Still rolling on, with silver chime,
In star-clad night and golden morning.
So went Love on, through cold and heat,
Singing "The Daisy's ever sweet."

'Twas then the flowers were haunted
With fairy forms and lovely things,
Whose beauty elder bards have chaunted,
And how they lived in crystal springs ;
And swang upon the honeyed bells,
In meadows danced round dark green mazes,
Strewed flowers around the holy wells,
But never trampled on the Daisies.
They spared the star that lit their feet,
The Daisy was so very sweet.

THOMAS MILLER.



AUTUMN WILD FLOWERS.

THE Autumn sun is shining,
Grey mists are on the hill ;
A russet tint is on the leaves,
But flowers are blowing still !

Still bright in wood and meadow ;
On moorlands dry and brown ;
By little streams ; by rivers broad ;
On every breezy down.

The little flowers are smiling,
With chilly dew-drops wet,
Are saying with a spirit voice,
“ We have not vanished yet.

“ No, though the spring be over ;
Though summer's strength be gone ;
Though autumn's wealth be garnered,
And winter cometh on ;

“ Still we have not departed,
We linger to the last,
And even on early winter’s brow
A cheerful ray will cast !”

Go forth, then, youths and maidens,
Be joyful whilst ye may ;
Go forth, then, child and mother,
And toiling men grown grey !

Go forth, though ye be humble,
And wan with toil and care ;
There are no fields so barren,
But some sweet flower is there !

Flowers spring up by the highway
Which busy feet have trod :
They rise up in the dreariest wood ;
They gem the dullest sod.

They need no learned gardeners
To nurture them with care ;
They only need the dews of earth,
The sunshine and the air.

And for earth’s lowly children,
For loving hearts and good,
They spring up all around us,
They will not be subdued.

Thank God ! when forth from Eden
The weeping pair was driven,
That unto earth, though cursed with thorns,
The little flowers were given !

That Eve when looking downward,
To face her God afraid,
Beheld the scented violet,
The primrose in the shade !

Thank God, ~~that~~ with the thistle
That sprang up in his toil,
The weary worker, Adam,
Saw roses gem the soil !

And still for anxious workers,
For hearts with anguish full,
Life, even on its dreariest paths,
Has flowers for them to cull !

ELIZA COOK.



THE COTTAGE WINDOW PLANT.

“**N**OTHER! I turned it yesterday,
And see it's moving round again :
The naughty thing will have its way,
And minding nothing I can say,
Peep through the window-pane.

“ It will keep twining to the light,
Buds, flowers, and leaves, and all :
I'm sure it has no sense, or sight,
Yet seems as if it reasoned—quite,
Or heard its sister call.

“ I want to make it bend this way,
And watch me at my book,
But, if I read, or work, or play,
If I am grave, or if I'm gay—
I cannot get a look.”

“ My Annie dear, it seeks the Source
Of heat, and life, and light ;
Its motions you can never force,
No hand can turn it from its course—
Be sure it moves aright.

“ It has a word for thee, my love,
Though mute, a voice divine ;
It bids thee turn to One above
In Whom we live, and breathe, and move,
Thy mother's God—and thine.” ANON.



HOW MAY WAS FIRST MADE.

AS Spring upon a silver cloud
Lay looking on the world below,
Watching the breezes as they bowed
The buds and blossoms to and fro,
She saw the fields with Hawthorns walled
Said Spring, "New buds I will create."
She to a Flower-Spirit called,
Who on the month of May did wait,
And bade her fetch a Hawthorn-spray,
That she might make the buds of May.

Said Spring, The grass looks green and bright,
The Hawthorn-hedges too are green,
I'll sprinkle them with flowers of light,
Such stars as earth hath never seen;
And all through England's girded vales,
Her steep hill-sides and haunted streams,
Where woodlands dip into the dales,
Where'er the Hawthorn stands and dreams,

Where thick-leaved trees make dark the day,
I'll light the land with flowers of May.

Like pearly dew-drops, white and round,
The shut up buds shall first appear,
And in them be such fragrance found,
As breeze before did never bear ;
Such as in Eden only dwelt,
When angels hover'd round its bowers,
And long-hair'd Eve at morning knelt
In innocence amid the flowers :
While the whole air was, every way,
Fill'd with a perfume sweet as May.

And oft shall groups of children come,
Threading their way through shady places,
From many a peaceful English home,
The sunshine falling on their faces ;
Starting with merry voice the thrush,
As through green lanes they wander singing,
To gather the sweet Hawthorn-bush ;
Which homeward in the evening bringing
With smiling faces, they shall say,
"There's nothing half so sweet as May."

And many a poet yet unborn
Shall link its name with some sweet lay,
And lovers oft at early morn
Shall gather blossoms of the May ;

With eyes bright as the silver dews
Which on the rounded May-buds sleep,
And lips, whose parted smiles diffuse
A sunshine o'er the watch they keep,
Shall open all their white array
Of pearls, ranged like the buds of May.
Spring shook the cloud on which she lay,
And silver'd o'er the Hawthorn spray,
Then shower'd down the buds of May.

T. MILLER.



THE SPIRITS OF THE FLOWERS.

SWEET shapes were there—the Spirits of the flowers;
Sent down to see the summer-beauties dress,
And feed their fragrant mouths with silver showers;
Their eyes peeped out from many a green recess,
And their fair forms made light the thick-set bowers;
The very flowers seemed eager to caress
Such living sisters,—and the boughs, long-leaved,
Clustered to catch the sighs their pearl-flushed bosoms
heaved.

IBID.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE VIOLETS.*

BY the silent foot of the shadowy hill
We slept in our green retreats,
And the April showers were wont to fill
Our hearts with sweets;

And though we lay in a lowly bower,
Yet all things loved us well,
And the waking bee left its fairest flower
With us to dwell.

But the warm May came in his pride to woo
The wealth of our virgin store,
And our hearts just felt his breath—and knew
Their sweets no more!

And the summer reigns on the quiet spot
Where we dwell—and its suns and showers
Bring balm to our sisters' hearts—but not—
Oh! not—to ours!

We live—we bloom—but for ever o'er
Is the charm of the earth and sky—
To our life, ye heavens, that balm restore—
Or—bid us die!

ANON.

* Which lose their scent in May.



SONG OF THE FLOWER-SPIRITS.

SISTER, sister, what dost thou twine.
I am weaving a wreath of the wild Woodbine,
I have streak'd it without like the sunset hue,
And silver'd it white with the morning dew :
And there is not a perfume which on the breeze blows
From the lips of the Pink or the mouth of the Rose,
That's sweeter than mine—that's sweeter than mine—
I have mingled them all in my wild Woodbine.

White watcher of blossoms, what weavest thou ?
I am stringing the Hawthorn-buds on a green bough ;
I have dyed them with pearl, and stolen the flush
Of the dawn from the hills, in the morning's faint blush ;
And the odours they breathe of, to me were first given
By an angel I knew in the gardens of heaven :
And Love, should he ever remember the tale,
Shall tell how I perfumed the May of the vale.

Beautiful spirit, why dost thou sigh ?
Sad thoughts float about me, like clouds on the sky,
Of the false vows that may on these blossoms be sworn,
Of the Rose that will wither, and leave but the thorn :





Song of the Flower-Spirits. 145

Of hopes that may live after love is long dead,
Like the stem left behind when the flower is shed.
And that is the cause why I sigh—why I sigh—
To think that the heart must be broken, to die.

Sister, sister, what hast thou found
Half hidden amid the green leaves on the ground ?
They are the dim Violets, daughters of Spring,
Deeper dyed than the blue of the butterfly's wing ;
Yet modest as Love in the bud of the Rose,
When the green can no longer its blushes enclose :
All the perfumes I've tried in the buds that I wreathe,
Yet found none half so sweet as the one that they breathe.

Beautiful spirit, why dost thou weep ?
For the death and decay that come swifter than sleep ;
For the Rose which my blushes at morn dyed with red,
That by night, in the full bloom of beauty, was dead.
For the beautiful lips they will to it compare,
For the cheeks that will fade be they never so fair :
They are mortal, sweet sister : here Death severs love,—
Lasting beauty but lives in the gardens above.

T. MILLER.

WORSHIP IN NATURE.

THE turf shall be my fragrant shrine—
My temple, Lord! that arch of Thine—
My censer's breath the mountain airs,
And silent thoughts my frequent prayers.

My choir shall be the moonlight waves,
When murmuring homeward to their caves,
Or, when the stillness of the sea
E'en more than music breathes of Thee.

Thy heaven, on which 'tis bliss to look,
Shall be my pure and shining book,
Where I shall read in words of flame,
The glories of thy wondrous name.

I'll read thy anger in the rack,
That clouds awhile the daybeam's track,—
Thy mercy in the azure hue
Of sunny brightness breaking through.

There's nothing bright above, below,
From flowers that bloom to stars that glow,
But in its light my soul can see
Some feature of the Deity.

There's nothing dark below, above,
But—in its gloom I trace thy love,
And meekly wait that moment, when
Thy truth shall turn all bright again.

MOORE.



TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH A PLOUGH.



EE, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush among the stoure*
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,†
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter, biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted‡ forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

* *Stoure*, dust. † *Weet*, rain, wetness. ‡ *Glinded*, peeped.

To a Mountain Daisy.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's* maun shield,
But thou, beneath the random bield†

O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise ;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies !

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who lang with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruined, sink !

Even thou, who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date ;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate
Full on thy bloom,
Till, crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom !

BURNS.

* *Wa's*, walls.

† *Random bield*, casual shelter.

WILD FLOWERS.

[These verses were written by the late Lady Noel Byron on hearing of prizes being given to the children employed in a cotton-mill for the best nosegay of wild flowers.]



HO loves the wild flower best?
The sailor who has never seen
For many weeks the living green
Of earth's familiar breast?

Perchance 'tis he who hath
In fever on his bed reclined,
And meets the healing, fragrant wind
And primrose in his path?

Or is he still more glad
Who, issuing from the prison's gloom,
Imagines all the flowers that bloom
In heightened colours clad?

No; there is yet a joy more pure,
Less tintured with regret or fear,
Where mem'ry mingles not a tear—
Oh! may that joy endure!

'Tis when the fact'ry child,
Strives for the kindly-offered prize,
And gathers for the judge's eyes
A garland fresh and wild.

In that sweet garland blend
Our Heavenly Father's smiles of love,
And the best pledge—how dear above!—
That man shall be man's friend!

A WILD-FLOWER WREATH.

Author of "Nugæ Sacræ."

IACH early flower that blows,
 The May-boughs wreathéd snows,
 The wild-brier's folded rose,
 And woodbine's fragrant bloom ;
 The speedwell's eye of blue,
 Suffused with morning dew,
 Should smilingly glance through
 The tr.sses of the broom.

The rustic blushing heath,
 That lurks the fern beneath,
 Should grace our wedding wreath
 With many a pendent bell ;
 The fair anemone
 Might well with these agree,
 Reft from her sheltering tree,
 Low in the copsewood dell.





SNOW-DROPS.

"DOVE ON THE CROSS."

NY snow-drops, oh, my snow-drops !
How gaily every spring
They covered all our mossy banks
With many a fairy ring !
How delicately beautiful
Their little blossoms were,
Like tiny spirits hovering
Upon the chilly air.

My snow-drops, oh, my snow-drops !
I shall never without pain
See your little fragile blossoms
In the early spring again ;
For my only one, my loved one,
A fragile thing like you,
Both came to me and left me
In the spring as snow-drops do.

Like the crimson light of sunset
Streaming through a wreath of snow,
So soft upon her pallid cheek
The hectic fever's glow.

As fading snow-drops gently sink
Upon the cold earth's breast,
So gently sank my holy child
To her eternal rest.

My only one, my loved one,
I shall see her yet again,
When I too am transplanted
From this world of grief and pain.
Her snow-drops, oh, her snow-drops !
Shall be ever dear to me—
I will cherish them as emblems
Of her immortality.

FLOWER DIAL.

'Twas a happy thought to mark the hours
By the opening and the folding flowers ;
Yet is not life in its real flight
Marked even thus on earth,
By the closing of one Hope's delight,
Ere another Hope hath birth ?

MRS. HEMANS.

h.



